

**Glenda Wiles**

---

**From:** McKay, Tod G -FS <tgmcay@fs.fed.us>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 31, 2017 2:15 PM  
**Subject:** Bitterroot NF - Fire Update - July 31, 2017  
**Attachments:** Fire Fact Sheet - 7-31-17.docx

	<b>FACT SHEET</b>
	<b>Wildfire Update</b>

**July 31, 2017**

**Contact:** Public Affairs Officer - Tod McKay  
**Phone:** 406-363-7122  
**Cell:** 406-531-1130

---

**What:** Bitterroot NF Fire Update  
**Location:** Bitterroot National Forest

---

**Summary:** Firefighters responded to 9 lightning caused wildfires on the Bitterroot National Forest last week. Due to the quick response of initial attack crews, all of the fires were kept small, under ½ acre. Crews remain on one fire this afternoon on the West Fork Ranger District. The ¼ acre Indian Hill fire is located seven miles NW of Nez Perce Pass. Due to its remote location, five firefighters had to flown in by a helicopter. The fire is expected to be contained later today.

**Dominic Butte Fire** did not grow in size over the weekend and remains at 55 acres. The lightning caused fire located on the Stevensville Ranger District in the Sapphire Mountains east of Corvallis is now 75 percent contained.

Fire activity is limited to hot spots on the northern edge of the fire in the old Dominic Point burn. Fire managers will continue utilizing helicopters for water drops to contain any active torching that occurs in this area. Firefighters will continue monitoring the fire this week especially with the weather forecast calling for continued hot and dry conditions with active fire behavior on existing fires.

Closures remain in place for Willow Creek Road and area trails. The closure will be re-evaluated at the end of this week. For more information visit <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/5396/>

**Tin Cup Fire** on the Darby/Sula Ranger District at the head of Tin Cup drainage remains at 35 acres in size. Smokejumpers have secured the fire by constructing line around it confining the fire into the rocks. The fire is being monitored daily by a remote camera and also by recon/air

patrol flights. There are no structures threatened, but a closure remains in place for Tin Cup Trail #96.

**White Cap & Vance Mountain Fires** are located on the West Fork Ranger District in Idaho's Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness three miles west of Tin Cup Lake. The White Cap fire remains at 5 acres in size and Vance Mountain is now estimated at 70 acres. Both are lightning caused and are remote with no access. They're located in extremely steep, rugged, and rocky terrain. These fire are not staffed as firefighter safety is the number one priority and they are not threatening any structures. The fires are being managed for resource benefits and monitored by staffed lookouts and daily recon/air patrol flights.

**Fire Danger:** Fire danger on the Bitterroot National Forest is "Very High". When fire danger is very high, fires will spread rapidly and have a quick increase in intensity, right after ignition. Small fires can quickly become large fires and exhibit extreme fire intensity, such as long-distance spotting and fire whirls. The fires can be difficult to control and will often become much larger and longer-lasting fires.

**Fire Restrictions:** Stage II Fire Restrictions went into effect in Ravalli County and on the Bitterroot National Forest last week. This means campfires and all other fires are prohibited along with operating motorized vehicles off designated trails. Firewood cutting is also prohibited after 1:00 p.m. and smoking is not allowed unless in enclosed vehicles, buildings, or flammable free areas. Camping stoves (Liquid petroleum) that can be turned on and off are allowed. Individuals who violate these restrictions can face fines up to \$5,000 and six months in jail along with paying suppression costs and damages, if you start a fire. For more information, go to <http://firerestrictions.us/>

**Weather:** Continued hot and dry conditions this week. A cold front is expected to move through on Tuesday night into Wednesday with wind gusts of 25-35 mph expected. The cooler temperatures and change in wind directions will have mixed results on smoke impacts across the region. According to the National Weather Service, Missoula has received no measurable rainfall in the month of July making it the driest July ever, since records began in 1893.

**Smoke/Air Quality:** Following a weekend of increased fire activity, air quality worsened in many locations. Air quality in Hamilton is currently "Unhealthy For Sensitive Groups". This means active children and adults, and people with respiratory disease, such as asthma should limit prolonged outdoor exertion.

For the latest air quality information visit <http://svc.mt.gov/deq/todaysair/>. This site displays particulate concentrations and health effects including a daily *Wildfire Smoke Update*.

Much of the smoke southwest of Hamilton is coming from lightning caused wilderness fires burning in Idaho. The largest is the 2,850 acre Moose 1 Fire on the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest which doubled in size last week. Smoke from this fire is impacting Lost Horse Canyon and areas south of Lost Horse (Darby). For more information on this fire and other fires burning around us (Lolo Peak, Sapphire Complex, Meyers/Whetstone Fires) visit <http://inciweb.nwcg.gov>.

**2017 Fire Season:** Firefighters have responded to and extinguished 42 wildfires on the Bitterroot National Forest this summer. Due to the quick response of crews, most fires were kept small -- under 1 acre in size.

*Please Note: Drones are dangerous if flown near wildfires.* Drones can interfere with wildland fire air traffic that are necessary to suppress fires and could ground firefighting aircraft due to safety concerns. Learn more at <http://www.nifc.gov/drones/>

###



**Tod McKay**  
**Public Affairs Officer**

**Forest Service**  
Bitterroot National Forest

p: 406-363-7122  
c: 406-531-1130  
[tgmckay@fs.fed.us](mailto:tgmckay@fs.fed.us)

1801 N. First  
Hamilton, MT 59840  
[www.fs.usda.gov/bitterroot](http://www.fs.usda.gov/bitterroot)



Caring for the land and serving people

This electronic message contains information generated by the USDA solely for the intended recipients. Any unauthorized interception of this message or the use or disclosure of the information it contains may violate the law and subject the violator to civil or criminal penalties. If you believe you have received this message in error, please notify the sender and delete the email immediately.